

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PSC DISMISSES HILDRETH-WILCOX EXTENDED AREA SERVICE PROPOSALS**

LINCOLN – Proposals from Hildreth and Wilcox for extended area telephone service, or toll-free calling, between the two communities were dismissed August 26 by the Nebraska Public Service Commission.

The Commission cited the failure of both communities to meet minimum long distance usage between them in putting a halt to the process. Telephone subscribers in both communities petitioned the PSC on June 20 for extended area service.

Commission rules require an average of five or more calls per customer per month from the petitioning exchange in a three-month test period as well as 50 percent of the customers making two or more of those calls per month. The months used for the traffic study were April through June of this year by Great Plains Communications, the local telephone company for Wilcox, and Citizens Communications, the local service provider for Hildreth.

Calls from Wilcox to Hildreth dropped during the three months from nine calls per customer in April, six calls in May, and two calls per customer in June. The percentage of Wilcox customers making at least two monthly calls to Hildreth also dropped from a high of 39 percent in May to 21 percent in June.

At Hildreth, the calls to Wilcox were considerably fewer with less than one call per customer in each of the three test months. In all three months, less than 10 percent of Hildreth customers made an average of two or more calls to Wilcox.

Commissioner Jerry Vap, serving District 5, represents this area and said, “Small community’s local calling needs have changed along with the business climate in rural Nebraska. Therefore, I encourage all carriers to review the local calling capability in the communities they serve.”

In dismissing the extended area service proposals, the Commission noted that both local telephone companies are considering calling plans that will provide alternatives for telephone traffic between the two communities.

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